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Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations: cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity

Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity

Report of the Secretary-General**

Summary

The year under review witnessed the final transformation of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) to the African Union. OAU, as it was previously structured, was brought to an end on 9 July 2002, and the African Union was born on 10 July. The process of establishment of a new organization necessitated the development of new organs and structures, as well as the drafting of terms of reference and rules of procedures. The United Nations supported these efforts by dispatching experts to assist OAU.

The next few years should witness a further review of the nature and context of collaboration between the United Nations and OAU. That review should reflect the new areas of priorities, as defined in the African Union, and the new structure of relationship between OAU and the African subregional organizations. The United Nations stands ready to work with the African Union in the realization of these priorities.

* A/57/150.

** The present report is based on information received as of 20 August 2002. Any submissions received after that date will be incorporated in an addendum or addenda to the report.

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I. Introduction

1. The General Assembly, at its fifty-sixth session, and following the consideration of my last report on cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity (OAU) (A/56/489), requested the Secretariat in resolution 56/48 of 7 December 2001 to report on the implementation of said resolution. The different departments and programmes of the United Nations were invited to contribute, reporting on their collaboration with OAU in the implementation of the resolution, strictly limiting their reports to activities that were undertaken in the year under review.

2. The year under review witnessed the transition of the Organization of African Unity to the African Union in Durban, South Africa on 9 July 2002. This event followed the decision of the Assembly of Heads of States and Government of the OAU (decision AHG/Dec. 160 (XXXVII)) taken at the summit of the OAU held in Lusaka in July 2001 upon the entry into force of the Constitutive Act of the African Union.

3. The United Nations continued to work in close collaboration with the newly appointed Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity. As in the past, this cooperation involved almost all the programmes and agencies of the United Nations system. The Secretary-General and the Secretariat cooperated closely with OAU in the management of some of the conflict situations affecting Africa. In this regard, the Secretary-General was represented at many of the major meetings of the organization, including all the meetings of the Central Organ, held at the level of ambassadors, foreign ministers and Heads of State. The Secretary-General participated personally in the thirty-seventh ordinary session of the Heads of State and Government of OAU, which was the last summit of OAU, and at the first summit of the African Union, both of which were held in Durban, South Africa, from 8 to 10 July 2002. He delivered a keynote address, in which he proposed a possible road map for the new African Union. The following is a report of the activities of both organizations in the year under review.

II. Department of Political Affairs

4. The United Nations Liaison Office with the Organization of African Unity, based in Addis Ababa, continued to provide the United Nations Secretariat with information on the activities of the OAU Central Organ of the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution, as well as monitoring the activities of the OAU secretariat in the area of peace and security. In the year under review, the OAU secretariat established a number of expert groups to assist the organization in the development of the proposed structure and terms of reference of the different institutions of the African Union. The United Nations was requested to provide expertise to facilitate the development of some of the proposals and also in the funding of many exercises. Two retired United Nations officials with extensive experience in the structure and operation of the United Nations Security Council were dispatched to OAU to assist in the development of the structure and rules of procedure of the proposed Peace and Security Commission of OAU. The United Nations Liaison Office kept the Secretariat fully apprised of the discussions and options that were being considered for the new African Union. In the area of peace

and security, the Department of Political Affairs continued to collaborate with OAU in addressing the following specific conflict situations:

A. Democratic Republic of the Congo (Inter-Congolese Dialogue)

5. The United Nations has supported the efforts of the Facilitator of the Inter-Congolese Dialogue, appointed by OAU, by providing staff and logistical support and organizing, in close cooperation with him, a series of informal consultations between the parties. Owing to the lack of agreement at the end of the meeting held in Sun City, South Africa in February 2002, the Secretary-General appointed Moustapha Niasse in June 2002 as his Special Envoy to help the Congolese parties reach an all-inclusive agreement on power sharing during the transitional period. Mr. Niasse has kept the OAU Secretary-General, the outgoing and current Chairmen and the Facilitator abreast of his consultations and efforts on a regular basis. The Special Envoy returned to the region on 13 August to continue his efforts.

B. Burundi

6. The close cooperation between the United Nations and OAU in efforts to bring about a political settlement to the conflict in Burundi has persisted through continuous discussions and coordination. OAU is a member of the Implementation Monitoring Committee, chaired by the United Nations, and the OAU Special Representative participated in a meeting of special envoys or representatives and international members of the Implementation Monitoring Committee on Burundi organized on 14 June by the Department of Political Affairs.

C. Central African Republic

7. The United Nations and OAU worked in close cooperation to defuse tensions in the Central African Republic following the aborted coup d'état of 28 May 2001, and to restore good-neighbourly relations between that country and Chad. This became necessary following the tensions that developed between the two countries after the former Chief of Staff of the armed forces of the Central African Republic, General François Bozize, who was accused of masterminding the attempted coup, was granted asylum in Chad. In this connection, the OAU delegation that was dispatched to Bangui sought to harmonize their approaches with the efforts of the United Nations Peace-Building Support Office in the Central African Republic, in order to ensure an effective and coherent international response. At the request of the United Nations Security Council, in its presidential statement of 10 January 2002 the Representative of the Secretary-General, on behalf of the Secretary-General, worked with the Representative of the Secretary-General of OAU to harmonize the various regional initiatives aimed at restoring calm and stability to the Central African Republic. In addition, the Representative of the Secretary-General attended in January 2002 the eighth ministerial session of the OAU Central Organ of the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution which was held in Tripoli to consider the situation in the Central African Republic.

D. Comoros

8. The United Nations worked in close cooperation with OAU on the peaceful resolution of the conflict in the Comoros, which led to the peace process initiated by the Fomboni agreement of 17 February 2001. The conflict was brought to a positive conclusion in 2002, leading to the end of the secessionist and constitutional crisis in that country. The ceremony of investiture of the President of the Union took place on 26 May 2002. The new Government in the Comoros assumed its position at the Durban summit of OAU, for the first time since the Lomé summit in 2000, when that country was barred from participating in meetings of OAU because of the unconstitutional nature of its Government. The people of the Comoros were congratulated for accepting a democratic and negotiated solution to the crisis in their country.

E. Madagascar

9. Since the beginning of the crisis in Madagascar, OAU and the United Nations have worked closely to find a negotiated settlement. Several high-level joint United Nations-OAU mediation efforts involving the OAU Secretary-General and the United Nations Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs resulted in the signing of an agreement in Dakar on 18 April 2002. On 21 June, the OAU Central Organ met at the level of Heads of State and issued a final communiqué calling for a negotiated solution through the holding of elections and the setting up of transitional arrangements. It also declared that the seat of Madagascar should be kept vacant pending resolution of the political crisis. On 10 July 2002, the African Union, at its first summit, held in Durban, decided to reaffirm the decision of the Central Organ and encourage the Malagasy parties to pursue a peaceful solution and organize elections with the assistance of the African Union and the United Nations.

III. Department of Peacekeeping Operations

A. Democratic Republic of the Congo

10. Cooperation between the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) and OAU has been strengthened as part of ongoing efforts to implement the provisions of the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement and United Nations Security Council resolutions. The Special Representative of the Secretary-General in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Secretary-General of OAU discussed the peace process in that country during two visits by the Special Representative to OAU headquarters in Addis Ababa in October 2001 and May 2002. In January 2002, the Secretary-General of OAU appointed Martin Bongo as his Special Representative in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, thus implementing an OAU decision to open an office in Kinshasa in order to enhance support for the peace process. The two special representatives have coordinated their respective efforts throughout the year and undertaken joint activities.

11. MONUC has also continued to provide technical and political assistance to the Facilitator of the Inter-Congolese Dialogue. MONUC and OAU undertook joint

initiatives to help the Congolese parties overcome the difficulties and obstacles faced during the sessions of the Dialogue in Sun City, South Africa (see para. 5). At the request of the Facilitator, joint MONUC/OAU/Office of the Facilitator delegations met with African Heads of State in March 2002, paving the way for the relaunch of the Dialogue and the convening of a regional summit on 2 April 2002 in Lusaka, during which the concerned parties reaffirmed their undertakings vis-à-vis the Lusaka Agreement.

12. On the margins of the Durban meetings of OAU/African Union, the Secretary-General consulted with OAU and met with the Presidents of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Rwanda to discuss the modalities for the withdrawal of Rwandese forces from the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The Special Envoy of the Secretary-General on the Inter-Congolese Dialogue, continued to work in close consultation with the Government of South Africa, the first Chairperson of the African Union, on the securing of an agreement between Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

B. Eritrea and Ethiopia

13. The United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE) continued close consultations with OAU at all levels in Addis Ababa and Asmara. The Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General provided regular briefings to OAU bodies, particularly the Central Organ of OAU. OAU continued to play a major role in the peace process, liaising with the Eritrean and Ethiopian authorities to move the process forward. At the military level, OAU has officers delegated to the Military Coordination Commission and maintains three military liaison officers each with UNMEE in Addis Ababa and Asmara.

C. Sierra Leone

14. In December 2001, the Secretary-General of OAU wrote to OAU member States and the international community requesting contributions to the reintegration aspects of the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme, including for training and education of ex-combatants. The Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Sierra Leone sought OAU assistance for the transformation of the Revolutionary United Front into a political party based on the Lomé Peace Agreement, of which OAU is a moral guarantor. Following a request from the Special Representative, OAU sent 15 observers to the May 2002 presidential and legislative elections in Sierra Leone.

D. Western Sahara

15. The Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Western Sahara and the Senior Representative of the OAU Secretary-General resident at Laayoune continued regular consultation on the evolution of the peace process in the Territory, and exchanged information on their respective meetings and consultations with Morocco and the Frente POLISARIO. The Special Representative and the OAU Senior Representative also continued to review the political developments in Africa which could have a bearing on Western Sahara. OAU has been fully represented by

designated observers at all identification centres in the Territory, in Morocco, Algeria and Mauritania over the five years that the process has been under way.

IV. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs

16. The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs has taken a first step in developing institutional arrangements that will provide a firm basis for a new partnership with regional and subregional African organizations in tackling Africa's humanitarian problems. To this end, the Office has recently established support offices for West Africa (in Abidjan), East Africa/Central Africa (in Nairobi), as well as the office of a Regional Disaster Response Adviser for southern Africa based in Gaborone, which will be relocated to Johannesburg, South Africa. All three offices will foster existing cooperation, both nationally and regionally, including with regional bodies such as the Economic Community of West African States, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development and the Southern Africa Development Community. The establishment of the East and Central Africa regional office has also involved the transfer of all liaison functions previously performed by the Office's component of the United Nations Organization of African Unity Liaison Office in Addis Ababa to the new Regional Support Office in Nairobi. The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs is looking forward to continuing these important functions with the newly established African Union, and in particular, establishing working relations with disaster management component of the African Union.

V. Department of Public Information

17. The Africa Recovery Unit of the Department of Public Information has continued to collaborate with and support the work of OAU, giving extensive coverage to the developments leading up to the new African Union, in particular to its major economic initiative, the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). The Department's publication, *Africa Recovery*, ran a five-page spread detailing the decision to form the African Union and on Africa's preparation for its own recovery plans (June 2002). Two articles described how the new African initiative was being positively received throughout the continent (October 2001), and a further four pages were devoted to NEPAD, describing how donor support for the Africa-owned programme was expanding, and the changes being made as African leaders fine-tune the New Partnership (December 2001). The cover story for the April 2002 issue, entitled "African Union: a dream under construction", focused on how the plan was being received by civil society across the continent and on questions raised about the plan by Africans themselves.

18. The News and Media Division continued its extensive news and press release coverage of activities and events of interest to the United Nations and OAU. In addition, United Nations Radio produced magazine and feature programmes on the following issues: significance of the transformation of OAU into the African Union (interview with the Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs); report of the United Nations Secretary-General on the African initiative (interview with the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs); and the challenges and

prospects for regional economic integration in Africa (interview with the former Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa, Adebayo Adedeji).

19. The Department of Public Information assisted in the drafting of an Op-Ed article, jointly authored by the Secretaries-General of the United Nations and OAU, regarding the peace process between Eritrea and Ethiopia. The decision of the Eritrea-Ethiopia Boundary Commission on border delimitation, as well as other documents, was posted on a special United Nations web site created by the Department. The Non-Governmental Organization Section, in cooperation with the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, held a conference in Tunis, entitled "Capacity-Building for the Informal NGO Regional Network in Africa".

VI. Economic Commission for Africa

A. Regional cooperation and integration

20. The Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) continued to work closely with OAU to enhance the implementation of the treaty establishing the African Economic Community, particularly in the execution of the UNDP-funded project, entitled "Promotion of Africa's Economic Integration through the Establishment of the African Economic Community" (RAF/94/008), which came to an end, in its initial formulation, on 31 December 2000. With the advent of the African Union and its attendant implications, the cooperation between the two organizations may need to be reviewed, taking into account emerging needs and priorities. This realization led to the extension of the project for a period of six months, with a view to facilitating the transition from OAU to the African Union. ECA continues to be the executing agency of the transition project and also participated in January 2002 in the discussions on the design of the key organs of the African Union. From the ongoing debate, it appears that a clear definition of the structure and other operational aspects of the African Union are important for enhanced collaboration between the African Union and ECA, as well as the other partners. A similar clarification would also be required with regard to the role that the regional economic communities are expected to play in consolidating the process leading to an effective African Union. In this regard, ECA and OAU continued to exchange views on modalities for enhancing the financial viability of the communities.

21. Moreover, during the period under review, a major event witnessed close collaboration between ECA and OAU: the third meeting of the African Development Forum, which was held from 3 to 8 March 2002 in Addis Ababa, and which discussed thoroughly the challenges and opportunities brought about by the African Union. The meeting was preceded by a symposium on the African Union held on 1 March 2002. Both events were prepared with the full participation of OAU, the highest-level staff of which were involved in the selection of topics selected for discussion and contributed written submissions on key issues. The third meeting of the African Development Forum adopted a consensus statement that is expected to inspire future action plans.

22. OAU was closely involved in the preparation of the first issue of the *Annual Report on Integration in Africa*. This flagship publication was launched by ECA in response to the observed vacuum in knowledge about the state of integration in Africa. OAU participated in the first meeting of the Steering Committee on the

publication that was established to provide technical guidance for the report, which aims at becoming an authoritative source of information and policy inspiration on regional integration on the continent. OAU/African Union is expected to become one of the major sources of data for future issues of the report.

B. Trade promotion

23. In collaboration with the OAU/African Union and other relevant institutions such as the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the African Economic Research Consortium, the Southern African Trade Research Network, and the Third World Network-Africa, ECA is undertaking a UNDP-sponsored "Regional Programme on Trade for Africa: follow-up to the Doha WTO Ministerial Meeting" as post-Doha technical assistance activities in support of African countries. The short-term goal of this coordinated technical assistance programme is to provide African policy makers with the tools they need to formulate policies in response to issues raised at the Doha meeting. In the longer term, the programme is to promote an approach that continues to build up the capacities of existing African institutions and network of researchers, policy makers, and other stakeholders in a sustainable manner.

24. As part of the Regional Programme on Trade for Africa, ECA, in cooperation with OAU/African Union and other relevant institutions, organized a workshop entitled "Service Trade Negotiations and Africa" in Johannesburg in April 2002, the main objective of which was to initiate a process for addressing the enormous challenges facing African countries in the global trading system — especially in the light of their extremely weak analytical capacity — by creating a pool of African experts and analysts for negotiations in trade in services at the national, regional and multilateral levels.

25. In the context of an ad hoc advocacy forum aimed at providing technical assistance to member States in specific issues, ECA, jointly with OAU, and in collaboration with UNCTAD, the African Economic Research Consortium and the World Trade Organization, organized a "High-level Brainstorming Meeting for African Trade Negotiators Preparatory to the Fourth WTO Ministerial Conference" in June 2001.

C. Gender and development

26. The OAU Secretary-General and the ECA Executive Secretary, cognizant of the various difficulties encountered by the African Women Committee on Peace and Development in implementing its activities, established an internal joint task force, with the mandate to review the structure and function of the Committee, so as to make it efficient and effective. The task force held a number of meetings between September 2001 and January 2002 and came up with recommendations to sharpen the institutional framework of the Committee and its mandate. The proposed orientation is to focus on advocacy, sensitization, awareness and capacity-building, an advisory role, monitoring and evaluation, all within the framework of peacemaking and conflict prevention. The interim secretariat of the Committee will be financed by OAU and ECA for one year following the election of the new

membership in 2002. Thereafter, the Committee is expected to establish a permanent secretariat and assume full financial responsibility for its operations.

D. Information technology

27. ECA designed and developed the post-African Development Forum II web site for OAU, which was used as the official web site for the OAU Summit on HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and Other Related Infectious Diseases, held from 24 to 27 April 2001 in Abuja, Nigeria. The web site was extensively used, particularly by the media, as an official access point for information on the summit. The Summit benefited extensively from the discussions and deliberations of the Forum, as well as the African Consensus and Plan of Action on HIV/AIDS adopted at the Forum, which provided considerable input to the Abuja Declaration on HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and Other Related Infectious Diseases. The ECA team that attended the meeting was led by the Deputy Executive Secretary and included a webmaster who assisted in publishing summit proceedings and related documents on the web site.

E. Pandemic diseases

28. In collaboration with OAU/African Union, as well as UNAIDS and the World Health Organization (WHO), ECA is preparing an Annual report on HIV/AIDS, TB, malaria, and other related infectious diseases. The purpose of the report is to monitor the implementation of the Abuja Declaration and the Declaration of Commitment of the special session of the General Assembly on HIV/AIDS, both aimed at fighting these diseases in the African continent. The report shall promote dialogue on the challenge of reducing the burden of these leading causes of mortality on the continent by discussing lessons learned and identifying promising strategies. The title of the first issue, launched in July 2002, is "Leadership Commitment for Better Health". While ECA is taking the leadership in the production of the report, including both technical and editorial tasks, the role of OAU/African Union will be more at the advocacy level for its dissemination among member States. In addition, during the African Development Forum III, held in March 2002, ECA, jointly with OAU, convened an HIV/AIDS focus group that highlighted the implications of regional integration for HIV/AIDS control and prevention with various ramifications.

F. Environment

29. ECA and OAU are in partnership with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations UNEP-Chemicals, the World Bank, the World Wildlife Fund-United States of America, and the Pesticide Action Network-United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, in a project called "African Stockpile Programme", as part of an effort to remove and destroy obsolete pesticides which have accumulated in African countries.

G. Population

30. As has been the case in the past, ECA, the African Development Bank (ADB), OAU and the United Nations Population Fund continued their cooperation in the area of population. From 28 to 31 January 2002, they held the fourth meeting of the Follow-up Committee on the Implementation of the Dakar/Ngor Declaration and the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development in Yaoundé (ECA was the lead organization); and from 11 to 14 February 2002, they held the fourth General Assembly of the African Population Commission in Addis Ababa (OAU was the lead organization). Recommendations from these regional processes identified the need for cooperation and collaboration within the framework of the New Partnership for Africa's Development. They also emphasized that agencies and other development partners should focus their activities in the following priority areas that address (directly or indirectly) concerns related to populations and employment: (a) poverty reduction and sustainable development; (b) HIV/AIDS; (c) population dynamics and distribution; (d) data, information and communications; (e) reproductive health; and (f) human resource development/employment.

VII. United Nations Development Programme

31. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) continues to support the OAU Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution and, most recently, the OAU transition process to the African Union. Following is a report on the specific projects that were undertaken by UNDP in support of OAU:

A. Capacity-Building for the OAU Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution (RAF/97/028)

32. The project has progressed very well since 1998, with most of the objectives having been fulfilled. At its meeting in June 2002, the Steering Committee decided to extend the programme until 31 December 2002. Funding of $380,000 has been provided to implement outstanding tasks, such as the operationalization of an early warning system and follow-up activities to the various meetings of OAU with the subregional and civil society organizations. A successor programme will be formulated in September 2002.

B. Support Project for the Planning of the Transition to the African Union (RAF/02/002)

33. The Preparatory Assistance Programme is the first instalment on building the privileged partnership between the United Nations and the African Union. It will enable UNDP to contribute strategically to the elaboration of a coherent framework for the transition to the African Union and the laying of a sound foundation for the building of strong institutional capacities and a resource base for the new organization. The duration of the Preparatory Assistance Programme is one year, ending in January 2003. However, the programme proposal for longer-term support will be considered as soon as it is ready.

VIII. United Nations Population Fund

34. Cooperation between OAU and UNFPA was based on the principle that OAU would play a catalytic role in the areas of political advocacy, coordination, monitoring and evaluation of population policies and interventions in Africa, while UNFPA would provide financial and technical support for enhancing such undertakings.

35. With UNFPA support, OAU created the African Population Commission in 1994 as a network of national population commissions and units to carry out political advocacy and coordination activities in support of policy development and implementation in the area of population. The Commission provides policy support and leadership, promotes coordination, monitoring and evaluation of population activities in member States, and encourages partnerships among Governments and non-governmental organizations. Its role has become more important with the adoption by African Heads of State and Government of the New Partnership for Africa's Development. UNFPA is supporting the plan of action of the African Population Commission with regard to technical and advocacy workshops on the review of progress made since the International Conference on Population and Development, NEPAD and the Millennium development goals. UNFPA is also assisting the OAU General Secretariat to provide technical and other support on population and development issues within OAU technical commissions and the African regional economic communities in the next two years during the transition of OAU to the African Union.

IX. Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS

36. As part of the Steering Committee and the Technical Committee, the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) supported the planning and the conduct of the special OAU Summit on HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and Other Related Infectious Diseases. In addition, a short-term consultant was seconded to OAU for nine months to support the planning and follow up of the Abuja Summit.

37. UNAIDS supported and participated in the thirty-seventh ordinary session of the Assembly of Heads of States and Government of OAU, held from 9 to 11 July 2001 in Lusaka, and which endorsed the decision of the African Summit on HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and Other Related Infectious Diseases. The Assembly appealed to the member States to commit adequate national resources in order to meet the challenges posed by the epidemic and to implement the Plan of Action. The summit also requested UNAIDS, WHO and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) to assist OAU to set up a unit, which will support the monitoring of the Plan of Action on a daily basis. The Assembly further requested the Secretary-General of OAU in collaboration with UNAIDS, WHO, UNICEF, ADB and ECA to follow up on the implementation of the Abuja Plan of Action and report annually to the Assembly.

38. Under the auspices of OAU, UNAIDS is supporting the Leadership AIDS Watch for Africa which comprises the Heads of States of Botswana, Ethiopia, Kenya, Mali, Nigeria, Rwanda, South Africa and Uganda to champion the cause of HIV/AIDS in Africa. In addition, the African Centre for HIV/AIDS Management is being established in Nigeria to provide policy analysis, formulation, and

management on HIV/AIDS and play a substantial role in the monitoring of the Abuja Declaration.

39. In this regard, UNAIDS is working in collaboration with OAU and ECA on the annual report entitled "Leadership Commitment for Better Health". The document, which focuses, on leadership, will monitor the implementation of the Plan of Action of the Abuja Summit, and the Lusaka meeting and the special session of the General Assembly. It will also highlight the lessons learned and best practices. UNAIDS has seconded a short-term consultant for 11 months to work on the annual report.

40. UNAIDS participated in the OAU meeting for the development of a mechanism for monitoring of the implementation of the Declaration and Plan of Action, which was held from 17 to 19 December 2001 at OAU headquarters. The outcome of the meeting was a draft matrix for monitoring and reporting on the implementation of the Abuja Plan of Action. The final document was submitted at the thirty-eighth Summit of Heads of States and Government in July 2002 for endorsement and disseminated to member States.

41. UNAIDS was a member of the inter-agency task force that prepared the First OAU Ministerial Conference on Drug Control. In addition, UNAIDS supported the preparation of the paper on drug abuse and HIV/AIDS pandemic which was presented during the OAU Ministerial Meeting held in Yamoussoukro, Côte d'Ivoire from 6 to 11 May 2002, in which UNAIDS participated.

X. Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

42. As part of the process to develop a coherent human rights strategy for the African region, OHCHR undertook several activities aimed at supporting OAU in the field of protecting and promoting human rights. From 5 to 7 November 2001, OHCHR organized a consultative dialogue in Geneva which brought together African Government representatives, non-governmental organizations, community-based organizations, academia, subregional economic organizations and human rights experts from the continent and the Diaspora. One of the objectives of the dialogue was to support OAU in its consultative process on the establishment of the African Union, as well as the New Partnership for Africa's Development. The theme of the consultations was "human rights, the African Union and the New Partnership for Africa's Development". The dialogue was organized in close collaboration with the OAU secretariat, ECA and the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights.

43. On 10 December 2001, the High Commissioner marked International Human Rights Day in Addis Ababa. During her visit, she held extensive discussions with the Secretary-General of OAU on human rights issues of mutual interest to both institutions. As part of the strategy of strengthening the human rights component of OAU activities, it was agreed that OHCHR would deploy a human rights officer to work with the different organs of OAU in Addis Ababa. The human rights officer will be supervised by the OHCHR Regional Representative to be based at ECA.

44. OHCHR has continued to support the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights. Following the evaluation in March 2002 of the assistance provided to the Commission since its establishment, OHCHR envisages a new cycle of

cooperation with it. OHCHR organized a workshop on the margins of the summit of the OAU held in Durban in July 2002 to stimulate discussions on the human rights component of the New Partnership for Africa's Development.

XI. Conclusion

45. **During the year under review, the various aspects of programme of cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of Africa Unity were successfully implemented with OAU under the leadership of its newly appointed Secretary-General. The coming into force of the African Union, as well as the decision that was taken at the first summit of the African Union, held in Durban in July 2002, to establish an interim secretariat and an interim chairperson of the African Union, should call for a complete review of the programme of cooperation between the two organizations. Under the previous biennial programme, the United Nations/OAU programme of cooperation that was adopted in April 2000 was due for review in 2002. However, OAU was of the view that, given its transition to the African Union, and with the need to develop the structure and mandates of its new institutions, such a review would be best conducted only after its governing bodies had agreed to the structure and functions of the new organization.**

46. **The United Nations stands ready to work with the African Union in the development of its new structures and programmes and in the implementation of its new agenda, including the New Partnership for Africa's Development and the Conference on Security, Stability, Development and Cooperation in Africa. The full integration of the regional economic community into the new African Union should also call for a rationalization and the streamlining of the programmes of cooperation between the United Nations and some of the subregional groupings.**